

Now That I'm Here, Where Do I Go?

Summer 2001



Tower Fall

photo courtesy Frank Smith

Tips for Getting Around

- Allow plenty of time to drive from place to place. Speed limits are 45 mph (73 km per hour) or lower; narrow, winding roads warrant slower speeds in many sections; and traffic is often heavy and slow
- Traffic is heaviest from mid June to mid September with daily peaks from mid morning to late afternoon
- Allow extra time when passing through road construction (see map on back page)
- Allow extra time for crossing mountain passes; Sylvan, Craig, and Dunraven are all over 8,000 ft (2427 m)
- Grand Loop Road provides access to major scenic attractions: 142 miles (229 km) total around; Upper Loop, 70 miles (113 km); Lower Loop, 96 miles (155 km)
- Driving time on the Grand Loop Road varies depending on road and weather conditions, and traffic
- You can drive the Grand Loop in one day, but you'll be in the car most of the time. See the tips at right if you have only a short time in Yellowstone.

Visitors can find the size of Yellowstone National Park and the variety of activities overwhelming. After all, you have several hundred miles of roads to drive, almost one thousand miles of trails to hike, seven major areas to explore, nine visitor centers or museums to visit, plus activities such as horseback riding, boating, interpretive programs and walks. To help plan your time in Yellowstone, consider the information here, read the material in the official map and guide (which includes mileage between major areas and detailed maps of these areas), or consult with interpretive rangers at the park's visitor centers.

Highlights

Only One Day Here?

Tips from Yellowstone's Rangers

One day driving tours

1. Drive to the Old Faithful area and walk around the geyser basin; drive to the Canyon area—stop at several overlooks and walk along part of the rim.
2. Add Hayden Valley to the above route—especially at the beginning or end of the day—to look for some of the park's large animals. (See map on page 8.)
3. Visit the Upper Geyser Basin (Old Faithful, Biscuit Basin, Black Sand Basin); drive to Fountain Paint Pot to view mudpots; drive to Canyon and visit Artist Point. End your day at Fishing Bridge Museum, which is on the shore of Yellowstone Lake.
4. Visit Old Faithful and one other thermal area, such as Norris, West Thumb, or Mammoth Hot Springs.
5. Visit lesser-known features such as Artist Paint Pots, Natural Bridge near Bridge Bay, Roaring Mountain north of Norris, Terrace Springs near Madison Junction, or Firehole Lake Drive in the Lower Geyser Basin.

Consider one or two moderate day hikes. Each major area of the park has several hikes suitable for brief excursions into the wilder side of Yellowstone. Consult the *Dayhike Sampler*, available for 50¢ at visitor centers.

If you have two or more days:

- Explore one area of the park in depth.
- Explore one theme, such as geology, in depth. For example, visit Mammoth Hot Springs to see travertine formations and view the sedimentary layers of Mount Everts, drive through glaciated terrain to Tower Fall or the Lamar Valley, climb Mount Washburn to view the Yellowstone Caldera and evidence of glaciers, visit the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.

Geysers & Hot Springs

Yellowstone's unparalleled array of thermal phenomena—geysers, hot springs, mudpots, and steam vents—provide evidence of the active volcano beneath our feet. In the 50 miles between Mammoth Hot Springs and Old Faithful, you'll see the travertine terraces of Mammoth Hot Springs, the acidic features of Norris Geyser Basin, mudpots and geysers at Fountain Paint Pot, and the vibrant hot springs of Midway Geyser Basin. West Thumb Geyser Basin is 17 miles east of Old Faithful; Mud Volcano is north of Yellowstone Lake.

Lake Area

The lake area lies in a stunning setting with the Absaroka Mountains as a backdrop. Four visitor areas lie along its shores: Fishing Bridge, Bridge Bay, Lake, and Grant/West Thumb. From these locations, you can hike, fish, boat, and watch wildlife. (Fishing and boating require permits; see page 6.) You can visit several historic buildings (see at right), witness a variety of thermal activity (see above), and see Yellowstone River continue its long journey as it flows from the lake.

Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone extends from just south of Canyon Village north to Tower Junction. The most famous and spectacular section, including the Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River, is seen from overlooks along the North and South Rim roads near the Canyon Village area. The northernmost extent of the canyon is visible from Tower Fall and Calcite Springs overlooks, 19 miles (31 km) north of Canyon Village.

The road between Tower Junction and Canyon Village goes over Dunraven Pass, the highest road in the park at 8,859 feet (2700

m). Along the way you will find spectacular views of the Absaroka Mountains, the Yellowstone caldera, and, on a clear day, the Teton Range to the south. This road also travels through areas where bighorn sheep, elk, and bears (black and grizzly) are often seen.

History

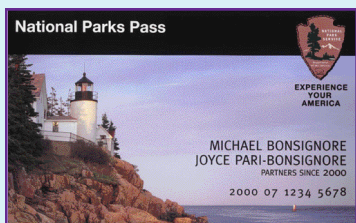
You are visiting an area that has been visited by people for more than 11,000 years. As recently as the 1800s, Native American tribes traversed the Yellowstone Plateau in search of buffalo, medicinal plants, and other resources. During the early 1800s, the first European Americans—fur trappers—explored the region, followed by a series of scientific expeditions in the mid to late 1800s. "Pleasure-seekers" followed after Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872—before any of the surrounding territories had become states. Other highlights of park history:

- In 1877, the Nez Perce crossed Yellowstone as they fled from Idaho to Canada in an ill-fated attempt to avoid being placed on a reservation.
- The Northern Pacific Railroad reached the park in 1883, bringing many visitors.
- The U.S. Army managed the park from 1886–1918; its headquarters were at Mammoth Hot Springs.
- Automobile travel came to Yellowstone in 1915.
- The National Park Service was established in 1916, and soon thereafter began managing the park.

Visitors interested in historic buildings and sites will find a number of examples here, including: Fishing Bridge Museum, Norris Geyser Basin Museum, Obsidian Cliff, Old Faithful Inn and Historic District, Roosevelt Lodge Historic District, and Fort Yellowstone (Mammoth Hot Springs; a self-guiding tour takes you around the fort).

Find more information about the park on www.nps.gov/ye

A Way to Save On Park Entrance Fees



The National Parks Pass

provides a way to save money when visiting national parks. For one annual fee of \$50, you can enter all National Park System areas. You receive a great value, and you also provide support to your favorite national parks. **A full 70% of the proceeds from the**

sales of passes at Yellowstone will go directly to projects that help visitors experience the area. The remaining proceeds go to a national fund that supports projects at any of the national parks in the system. To obtain your pass, stop by one of Yellowstone's entrance stations, or purchase the pass online at www.nationalparks.org or call toll-free: 1-888-GO-PARKS (1-888-467-2757). For an additional \$15, you can upgrade your National Park Pass to a Golden Eagle Pass, which provides admission to all national parks, national wildlife refuges, and other federal fee areas.

Private, noncommercial automobile	\$20 (7 days, both Yellowstone and Grand Teton)
Individual snowmobile, motorcycle	\$15 (7 days, both parks)
Single entry (foot, bike, ski, etc.)	\$10 (7 days, both parks)
Annual Pass, both parks	\$40 (valid one year from date of purchase)
National Parks Pass	\$50 (valid one year from date of purchase for entrance fees at National Park Service areas)
Golden Eagle Pass	\$65 (valid one year from date of purchase at most federal fee collection areas)
Golden Age Pass	\$10 (one-time fee for lifetime pass—available to those citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. 62 years of age and older)
Golden Access Pass	Free (available to those citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. who have been determined to be blind or permanently disabled)
NOTE: Remember to keep your admission receipt in order to re-enter the park.	